

August 6, 1987

TO: File

FROM: Frank J. Filas, Reclamation Engineer

RE: Prereclamation Inspection, M/019/009 - Cactus Rat,
M037/010 - Windfall, and M/037/008 - Locust Spider

On July 15, 1987, Frank Filas and Frank Jensen toured the above referenced mine sites with Richard Blubaugh and Carl Dixon of Atlas Minerals and Jody Bierschied of B & W Construction company. B & W Construction will be reclaiming all three sites this fall.

The Cactus Rat permit area covers 17 acres and is dotted with declines and associated waste piles. The uranium ore is located very close to the surface and, consequently, there are a number of cave-ins and sinkholes above the underground workings. The only portion of this property that was mined after May, 1975, was a decline on the east end that disturbed one to two surface acres (see DOE/019/004). Atlas Minerals has committed, however, to reclaim the entire 17 acres and should be commended for doing so.

It was agreed that all the declines would be backfilled and the best salvageable soil material placed on top. Surface areas that have sinkholes and serious subsidence potential will be blasted down after backfilling material over them. It was also agreed that the old camp building which is used occasionally by ranchers and campers will be left untouched. The approved seed mixture of five pounds of seed per acre appears to be too light a seed rate, and we agreed to provide a recommendation for seed and fertilizer rates.

Attempts to reach the Windfall Mine and Locust Spider Mine were not successful due to poor road conditions. The road to the Windfall Mine is approximately five miles into East Canyon. It is located adjacent to a gas line and is overgrown with vegetation. (Note: there is an abandoned trailer adjacent to this road.) The road has reclaimed itself to a large degree. No further reclamation is planned for this road because it is needed for gas line access. Mr. Bierschied plans to shove the onsite building and the old mine cars inside the portals and then backfill the two portals. The drainage through the old waste area will be left in place and the waste will be graded and contoured on either side. All disturbed areas will be seeded with the approved seed mix. Frank Jensen suggested that they add a little rabbitbrush to the seed mix since it was growing prolifically in the area. The proposed waste areas in the original plan were never used and the total area to be reclaimed is about one acre.

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The Locust Spider is a very small site (less than one acre) with two portals. The access road was never included in the permit since it was also used by other mines further up on the mesa. The pad area was described by Mr. Bierschied as being barely wide enough to turn around on. The claim holder does not wish to have the portals permanently sealed, and there is no material available for backfilling. It was agreed that a solid timber bulkhead would be constructed in each portal. The narrow pad area has volunteer vegetation on it, and no attempt will be made to seed this area. This appears to be the right course of action because the site could have easily qualified for exemption status, and moving heavy equipment into this area would probably redisturb surface area that has reclaimed itself by being left untouched for a half-dozen years.

Mr. Dixon suggested that the Division visit the sites shortly after they have been reclaimed. This is a good idea, especially for the Windfall and Locust sites where accessibility is limited.

clj
cc: L. Braxton
F. Jensen
1243R/20-21